NYPL

ECA/SERPD/SPPRU/TP/89/1

GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING POPULAR PARTICIPATION, PARTICULARLY OF RURAL WOMEN AND YOUTH, IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN AFRICA

LC/MAIN03

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

December 1989

ECA/SERPD/SPPRU/TP/89/1

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING POPULAR PARTICIPATION, PARTICULARLY OF RURAL WOMEN AND YOUTH, IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN AFRICA

December 1989

Table of contents

		Page
1.	Conceptual clarification	1
2.	Popular participation in historical perspective.....	2
3.	Forms of participation existing today.....	6
	3.1. Community based improvement societies.....	6
	3.1.1 Group resources.....	8
	3.2. Co-operatives.....	9
	3.3. Political organizations.....	9
4.	The participation of youth.....	10
5.	Major obstacles to the participation of women and youth.....	11
6.	Official attempts at mobilizing the rural populace.....	15
7.	Recommendations.....	17
	7.1. Conceptual issues.....	17
	7.2. Structural/institutional issues.....	18
	7.3. Legal issues.....	20
	7.4. Procedural issues.....	21
8.	Conclusion.....	22
9.	Reference.....	23

1. Conceptual clarification

As an approach to development, the concept 'popular participation' remains a fluid one for which there is still no overall consensus among various interested parties including local group leaders, national governments and international donor agencies. Nonetheless, it is an idea that was familiar to precolonial communities all across Africa, nuances in structural and procedural arrangements notwithstanding. By and large, there was an emphasis on the collectivity and the individual's duties to the group. Participation in community or group projects was stressed. This was a mechanism to ensure the growth and survival of the lineage or community over the generations. It was an approach to problem solving that was fully exploited by both the collectivity and individual, be they perennial problems or unexpected crises.

As a result of the different views on participation and the anxieties over the slow pace of rural participatory development, there have been a number of attempts to outline the ideals of popular participation and present a conceptual goal towards which communities can work. In stating these ideals the less desirable dimensions of the behaviour of both local community members and outsiders are being called into question. As understood today, popular participation involves a focus on both the means by which local-level development can be achieved as well as a goal (or end). As a goal it involves self-confidence and local control of resources, projects and activities (McCall, 1987). The two dimensions reinforce each other at every stage of development. In addition, McCall reviewed three interpretations of the concept each of which can be placed along a continuum from the least to the most radical. With the first, popular participation merely involves activities in which community members facilitate, carry out or make possible the policies and programmes of outside authorities. At the next level, local participants become involved in guiding programmes still initiated outside to suit their own needs. Programmes are thus modified and mediated. Finally, popular participation may be seen as the process of empowerment in which people are given access to the resources they need to define their problems priorities and work towards their own solutions.

In dealing with the poorest or weakest groups in societies, both outsiders and community elites increasingly feel threatened as attention moves along the continuum from facilitation to empowerment. In Africa, the majority of ethnic groups and communities were stratified and hierarchical. Age, sex and seniority were basic criteria of stratification in precolonial times. Within these communities, women and youth were more circumscribed in their access to resources and spheres of action. From the household level to the civil community, politics and the economy, these groups tended to lag behind men and elders in terms of empowerment. Any radical interpretation of popular participation as a means for development would necessarily focus on the activities of these two categories within the community.

Although the concept of popular participation has been gaining momentum since the 1950s, more failures than successes have been recorded by governments and international agencies. According to Olowu (1989) this is due to the persistent conceptual inadequacies of those attempting to initiate development from the bottom. The focus has been on decentralization, a process whereby authorities decongest facilities at the centre, relocate them at the periphery of the political system and seek to extend bureaucratic control to the rural areas. No empowerment of the populace is intended. Similar to McCall's concept

of facilitation, what is sought is a means of "improving the efficiency of their own selected interventions" and also an end in "legitimizing and obfuscating what are really their 'top-down' approaches (McCall 1987:5). In comparison, self-governance (Olowu, 1989) focuses on the creation of contexts in which people can solve their problems in ways that are feasible to them.

Taken in its totality, popular participation as reviewed above not only denotes an appreciation of the way it has been developed and practised within the local communities across Africa, but will also involve a critique of local methods where the privileges of powerful groups preclude the empowerment and development of lower status groups.

2. Popular participation in historical perspective

A wide range of participatory patterns existed in precolonial Africa. Many of these took on new forms and functions during the colonial and postcolonial eras. In addition, entirely new forms of association were created by community members to solve their problems. The various forms of participation may be distinguished on the basis of whether or not they occurred within the formal political, religious and economic structures already established by communities. A major contention of many scholars is that, by and large, women and youth have effectively been excluded from active participation in political establishments. Their activities have evolved within a variety of associations, clubs and groups devised to meet their special needs. Increasingly however, more central roles are being sought for these groups given their present and potential contributions to the economic and social survival of communities.

Many precolonial societies had embraced Islam in which the laws defined women and children as legal minors to be excluded from political and public life. It was also common for women under centralized systems to be given only limited representation through aristocratic female title holders such as those of queen mother, ruler's wife or sister as among the Kanuri (Nigeria), Ewe (Ghana), Yoruba (Nigeria) Baganda (Uganda) and Zulu (South Africa) (Onwuejeogu 1975; Afonja 1983; Parpart, 1986). Again, women were often excluded from or allowed restricted entrance into important secret societies which performed political, religious and legal function (e.g) the Ekpe society among the Efik and Ogboni among the Yoruba of Nigeria).

In contrast to this limited access to formal positions of authority, the generality of women and youth participated in a variety of interlocking association and groups which served their interests. These organizations ranged from multipurpose macro-structures such as age-grade systems to micro-level associations with limited objectives such as rotating credit unions. While some were highly structured with official positions and regular meetings others were relatively informal groupings for co-operation on farms. Finally, membership could be compulsory as for the age-sets among the Kikuyu and occupational guilds in Yorubaland or voluntary as with the credit societies. In reviewing these types of associations, one is confronted by the consistency with which four types were commonly found within the precolonial setting. These were mutual aid associations/groups, economic institutions, age-sets and occupational associations.

7

Mutual aid associations were widespread phenomena, which existed for many purposes including farm work, assistance to widows, the aged, sick or mothers in times of confinement. A lot of community projects were executed through these associations. Among the Ethiopians, the debbo institution was very similar to the"aro"(rotating work group) and"owe"(communal labour) of the Yoruba. To clear forest plots the Beti of Cameroon worked in lineage or village groups, later women also worked on an exchange basis to plant groundnuts on their individual plots. Among the Kikuyu, women worked on each others "harbo" through the customs of"Ngwatio"(Stamp 1975/1976: Guyer 1980: Baka and Terefe 1984). The credit union also had many versions. It was to be found all over West Africa, in Ghana, the Ivory Coast, and Nigeria,for instance. In East Africa, versions existed in Ethiopia and the United Republic of Tanzania. Known as"Esusu"or"Ajo" among the Yoruba and"Ekub"in Ethiopia, it operated among lineage members, people located within the same household or district among friends and occupation associates and so forth. The amount contributed and benefits received may or may not be equal and could be collected by a member of the team or an employed treasurer/collector. The money could be collected on a daily, weekly or monthly basis and was then given to each member in rotation or through a lottery system. The amount received was expected to be used to improve a members economic situation. In some cases, group projects were the main targets for such funds.

The age-grade system was found in many parts of Africa. It existed for instance in the United Republic of Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, the Gambia, Burkina Faso, the Cameroon and Senegal. There were numerous differences as to the age of entry, the intervals between the grades, methods of moving into the next grade and the degree to which females had a comparable set-up to males (Madinka of the Gambia) or were loosely attached to the grade of their husbands (Borana of Ethiopia). Age-grade membership was generally compulsory and usually cut across lineage and quarter/ward locations, to enable the community organize its members for communal activities. It was a multipurpose hierarchical organization for the performance of social, political, military and economic tasks. The energies of the youth were particularly harnessed within age-grade systems. In Nigeria for example, among the Tiv, Urhobo, Ijaw, Igbo, Annang, Kalabari and Yoruba young men (and often women) below the age of 30 years did the heavy communal work of clearing forests, constructing roads and houses or performing sanitation work. These groups also served as important socializing and monitoring units with regard to the individual's behaviour. In Cameroon, there were two types, the cultural groups and the trainee groups. In the case of the latter, youth of the same sex would be given instruction by the elders of the community. Sometimes, this entailed a complete withdrawal from society. Among the Kikuyu of Mitero, females had their own distinct age-grades based on the act of circumcision and the age of a woman's children. Organized hierarchically, the socialization role of the four grades was a salient function. Women who had given birth belonged to the last two grades and often worked together with the older women supervising women within the younger grade. As from puberty, girls were required to have close association with members of their set in order to learn about life in general and their communal duties (Stamp 1975/1976). Age grade systems generally worked through a delicate balance between the principles of companionship/equaling and seniority/gerontocracy, and thus helped to motivate people to perform their duties. The leaders were from the upper reaches of each set and served as communication links to older age-sets and political or social groups within the community. Compared to the

other three types of associations, it would appear that the age-set system did not survive the onslaught of colonialism, urbanization and western education.

Finally, there were the occupational associations or guilds in which membership was usually compulsory, and which performed a number of political, economic and religious functions. In West Africa, where women often collectively wielded economic power within the society, craft associations and trade guilds flourished. Among the Yoruba, men and women were organized into separate guilds based on the economic tasks of each. Women for instance, made "indigodye," pottery, baskets, soap and palm oil (Fadipe, 1970). Beginning from the fifteenth century, they became established in the internal and petty trade section of the market system. Their associations regulated their work and devised means to protect the interest of members. Women had their own leaders and deities for protection. Of all the associations, the market women's associations have received the most attention in the literature (LLoyd 1967; Little 1965; Aba, 1982). Nonetheless, other associations existed for women within and outside of Nigeria. For instance, female secret societies existed in several societies. In Sierra Leone, Sande was the well respected women's secret society which was formed to turn initiates into marriageable women. It was the female counterpart of the Poro society. A polygynist's first wife would likely be a Sande woman who was required to organize the household into an agricultural labour force. She controlled the storage of food and marketing of surplus and thus participated actively at the household level.

In sum, in the precolonial era, women and youth were organized through a network of compulsory and voluntary (e.g. the drinking clubs of Ethiopian youth, rotating credit associations) groups. Many were formally organized with officials, entrance fees, meetings and stipulated forms of punishment. They allowed individuals and groups to perform more efficiently communal and household duties within the society. It is important to emphasize the segregated character of most of these groups as well as the importance placed on status and hierarchy. These often served to reinforce the very values and practices which kept certain groups subordinate within the community. At the same time the groups were the major fora through which women and youth learnt the process of problem identification and solving.

The colonial period proved to be quite disruptive of many aspects of African life. Stated briefly, forms of popular participation were affected by three distinct processes. First, colonial governments instituted administrative, political and economic changes which took the initiative of participation out of the hands of the local people. The rural areas were particularly affected by programmes which led to the migration of men to towns for wage employment and altered the division of labour between the sexes (Bujra 1983; Brown 1983). In addition, the educational and employment policies on women restricted their advancement in the newly created formal sector and towns. Land reforms sometimes resulted in women's loss of land rights (Mikell 1985) and the growth of cash crops under the control of men, meant that women no longer received the old monetary rewards for their labour, as in Zambia, Nigeria, and the United Republic of Tanzania (Babalola 1983; Parpart 1986). Increasingly women became aware that while being required to produce more to sustain their families, they were losing their political voice. On many occasions, women used their indigenous forms of association to mobilize against the encroachment. Thus the Aba women's war of

1929, the formation of the Catholic Eastern Women's Association (CEWA) and the Abeokuta Women's Union in Nigeria. Pare women demonstrated in Tanzania in 1940s, as did the Kikuyu in the 1920s (Barr 1975/1976; Gateere 1989).

The second process involved the alteration of indigenous structures and practices as Western institutions penetrated communities. Among the Yoruba for example, there were changes in the power and functions of the head of the market women, the Iyaloja (Fadaka 1989). The allocation of market stalls, sanitation activities and the collection of taxes were taken over by the British administrative. In Kenya, the effect of the Maumau rebellion, Christianity and the refusal of younger women to submit to the control of the older age groups meant that the age-group system began to crumble. It did not survive the colonial period (Stamp 1975/1976). Many religious associations also lost adherents as a result of Christianity and the rise of new sects such as the Aladura in Nigeria.

Lastly, new associations flourished often to fill the gap left by the aforementioned changes. These were predominantly voluntary in nature, although a lot of pressure was put on people at the local level to join. Most of these were self-help groups formed by local initiative. In Nigeria, it has been argued (Ekong 1983) that the rural areas particularly felt neglected by the central government whose main focus was the urban centres. In a study among the Ibibio of South Eastern Nigeria, Ekong reported that voluntary associations began to proliferate in the 1920s. Many were organized on a clan basis and focused on community development projects such as roads, bridges, schools and farms. Similar activities occurred in the other regions of Nigeria (Otite 1975; Olowu 1989). Branches of the home-based association were usually formed by urban migrants and there developed effective networks of communication between urban and rural areas. Information, money and advice flowed backwards and forwards for the pulling of resources on projects. A high degree of accountability and co-operation existed between the various categories of actors along the networks (Olowu 1989). This was in contrast to the growing estrangement between the State and the populace in the planning and implementation of 'development' projects. People now felt that, with regard to the central government, they were being excluded from major decisions affecting their welfare.

Voluntary associations proliferated and became more formalized versions of the old indigenous associations. The Iddir developed as the formal organization for the old burial associations in Ethiopia (Lewis 1970). It could be formed by a group of neighbours or a whole community and provided emotional and financial security at the time of bereavement. Where the group had no educated person to keep its books, one would be hired. Those elected to office were persons held in high esteem by the group. Other grass-roots associations were based on religious affiliation, friendship (for eating and drinking) as well as work. In Colonial Ghana, hired female labours on the shallot farms in Anloga organized themselves into 'companies'. These groups were lead by female bosses who supervised the company and negotiated work conditions. On one occasion, the bosses all came together to successfully protest the discrepancy in male and female wages. Men however hired themselves out on individual bases.

Also, wealthy female traders formed unions to provide wholesale services to neighbouring towns (Geiger 1982).

Such locally initiated associations often differed in their structure and programmes from organizations sponsored by the colonial governments. Thus even though the Maendeleo Yawanawake (Myw) was initiated in 1951 by the rural wives of returning World War II veterans in Kenya it was soon controlled by the government which trained field workers to teach rural women the art of homemaking and domestic science (Unsando 1981). Browne (1975) has noted that although a substantial network of clubs was established, rural women often denied that it was a grass-roots formation. Leaders were sometimes foistered on the women, as were programmes and planning mechanisms. Myw is sometimes seen as the association of the elite peasantry.

Compared to the above developments, even more extensive changes have occurred in the structure and degree of popular participation in the postcolonial era. As Durning (1989) has pointed out, there has been an explosion in the growth of community-based, self-help groups over much of Africa. As the environment deteriorates and population pressure reduces the size of family farm plots, rural people have sought to solve their problems through group activity. In Zimbabwe for instance, small-farmer groups comprise over 400,000 members, of which 80 per cent are women. In Kenya, the 1988 estimation was that there were 25,000 registered women's groups attempting development and self-help. Here groups often start with one programme, such as literacy classes or home improvement unions, and later branch out to other ventures including "handicrafts, tree planting, primary health care, co-operative farming, soil conservation, savings and credit and water supply" (Durning 1989:20-21). The relationship of national governments to these groups is varied. In some regions, notably East Africa, the authorities have for long attempted to harness or redirect the energies of these groupings. In other places (e.g. West Africa - Nigeria) a wide schism still exists between the development programmes of the central government and those of grass-roots organizations. Increasingly efforts are being made to bridge the gap but many problems exist, not the least of which is an attempt at control rather than encouraging self-governance. More will be said on this subject below, in the discussion of States' attempts at instituting participatory development.

3. Forms of participation existing today

Since the variety of institutional structures and groups attempting to evolve solutions to community problems across the continent are too numerous to embrace, a review will be made of just three salient types: improvement societies; co-operatives and political organizations.

3.1. Community-based improvement societies

It has been argued that community self-help associations are springing up all over rural Africa, but no where are they as prevalent as in Kenya and Southern Nigeria (Olowu, 1989). After independence in Kenya, the Harambee (Oyugi 1985) movement became an expression of the people's dissatisfaction with the increased centralization of decision making and programme development. Within this movement new women's organizations arose in the rural areas to take the

place of the old age-grade system. The aim was to use indigenous co-operative know-how to improve farming activities (Stamp 1975/1976). Initiative came from the bottom and many groups succeeded in working co-operative farms, buying equipment and materials collectively and giving loans to members. One well-known type was the Mabati group of middle peasantry (Browne 1975) which usually began as rotating credit unions. The money collected by each member was used to roof her house with corrugated iron sheets or conduct some other activity. Once in motion, the group worked on other projects as needed. Gateere (1989) has reported that the focus tends to be on obtaining and distributing disposable resources among members. The groups are generally non-profit organizations. The establishment of ventures, which could develop finances to build community structures such as health centres or roads, are of secondary interest. Similarly, Pearce reported that in Southwestern Nigeria "rural self-help groups which are oriented to community services --- tend to be the youth and/or joint associations. Women's self-help groups within rural areas essentially aim to serve group members" (1989: 28). It is only when one observes women at the upper echelons of society that one finds projects initiated specifically to assist the wider community. At this level, Old Girls Associations or branches of village-based groups build day care centres, wells, or institute scholarships or awards for promising females in the rural areas.

In the United Republic of Tanzania, the mobilization of women began in 1955 when Bibi Titi Mohamed organized the Women's Wing of TANU. After independence this became Umoja Wa Wanawake Wa Tanzania (UWT) (Geiger 1982). Over the years, the association turned its focus on problems specific to women as a group, and the removal of indigenous exploitative practices. By 1975 UWT groups had developed a number of commercial ventures including canteens, shops, hotels and handicraft industries. As with Kenya and Nigeria, women in these groups see the venture as their support system through which they can quickly distribute profits among themselves and keep membership low. UWT operates mainly in the urban areas but there is a lot of pressure to have them expand to rural areas. Attempts have therefore been made to seek out rural women to ascertain their needs and the types of projects which would be useful to them.

After the Ethiopian Revolution, all rural land was made collective and peasant associations established in 1975. From the village level these were affiliated to larger units up to an apex organization entitled the 'All Ethiopian Peasant Association'. However, although women have been encouraged to join, only 12.7 per cent of the Peasant Association members are women. Likewise their participation in leadership positions is negligible (ILO 1986). Also, a network of autonomous women's mass associations developed which gave rise to the Revolutionary Ethiopian Women's Association (REWA). It boasts of 21,000 primary level bodies covering 60 per cent of the female population above the age of 15 years. The main activities developed for rural women are child care services, literacy classes, bakeries, poultry farms and consciousness raising groups. According to the ILO report (1986), the women's organizations are particularly interested in making women more aware of the cultural and institutional basis of their low status, and inability to participate more in development programmes.

3.1.1 Group resources

A major resource of modern female associations in Africa has been their knowledge of indigenous modes of organization and co-operation. In most countries, the new groups have built upon the skills of the old. Thus in Kenya, present day associations use old co-operative patterns to solve new problems. Thus rotating credit unions are called Mategа after the system of exchanging services (bringing firewood to new mothers) among age-mates (Stamp 1975/1976). The old leadership qualities are still a premium. Mabati groups still place an emphasis on trustworthiness, hard-work, the ability to compromise and expertise in the group's activities (Gateere 1989). Contemporary associations often have a wider array of offices than before. In Nigeria, besides the position of president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, many organizations elect assistant secretaries, financial secretaries, auditors and public relations officers (Pearce 1989). However, when associations are composed of predominantely illiterate persons neither the method of selection nor term of office is routinized.

By and large, the finance and labour needed to execute projects are generated by the group members. Thus in Kenya, it was revealed that only 3 per cent of the revenue of these groups is obtained from external sources. In Nigeria, besides the contribution of members, fund drives and rallies are held and where the group is registered, bank loans are also sought. Nonetheless, finance remains a major constraint. When international or official funding is sought, the group is required to tailor its programme to suit the ideals of the funding organization. Grass-roots initiative is often lost (Geiger 1982). While a major disadvantage of the groups tends to be their small financial capacity, the emphasis on self-reliance and perseverance brings with it the end product of self-confidence, control and the innovative behaviour discussed earlier.

3.2. Co-operatives

In addition to building on to the indigenous methods of co-operation, modern co-operatives are being developed with the assistance of official guidelines. Patcha (1989) reported that for Cameroon, the Ministry of Agriculture has set up a programme to educate, inspect and register co-operative societies. Those that need assistance in organizing their activities to ensure a take-off are also helped. Though interest in co-operatives for women developed in the 1970s in Nigeria, participation remains small. Only about 10 per cent of all co-operatives in Oyo State (Southwestern region) for example, are women's co-operatives (Shuaib 1985). Apart from the fact that poor rural women are unable to satisfy the government's conditions for registration, male opposition and functional illiteracy remain obstacles (Ladipo 1981). Nonetheless, a striking feature of co-operative ventures is the range of institutions devised to suit groups' needs and abilities. While some use the banking facilities, others do not. Some are certified by the government while others are not. Lastly, many remain single sexed (especially among the Moslems), but others are mixed groups.

Co-operative farming was the impetus for the first voluntary Ujamaa village system established in Tanzania by 19 families in 1971 (ECA 1989). Later there was an official drive to create more (compulsory) Ujamaa villages. In these,

the interest in co-operative effort through work teams has not been as high as in the voluntary villages. While the villages are corporate bodies with their own decision-making machinery, development projects initiated by them must be endorsed by government officials at the district level. Thus the lack of motivation for communal work as opposed to private ventures retards the success of the scheme (Maeda 1982).

Finally, a lot of effort has gone into creating co-operative structures in Ethiopia. In 1978, provisions were made for the establishment of four types of co-operatives (service, producers, thrift/credit and housing co-operatives). However, as in other countries, female membership lags behind men's. Thus in 1983, only 7.9 per cent of the membership of agricultural producers' co-operatives were women (Daka and Terefe 1984). Apart from negative attitudes concerning female participation, women's multiple roles hinder effective involvement. For instance, to enable the women to work steadily within one of the settlements, members of the Melka Oba Producer's Co-operative had to first solve the problem of child care and nutrition. Day care facilities had to be developed. This was accomplished through the joint effort of members within the community, who provided a building and the management staff, and outside organizations. The latter worked as a team to provide training, advice and funds. From this experience, community members gained the confidence to complete other facilities/services such as an elementary school and adult classes (Gebre 1988).

3.3 Political organizations

It is in the area of direct political participation that women have made the least gains. Having lost much ground during the colonial era, little headway has ben made within modern structures. Women are generally excluded from formal political institutions and organizations for planning, such as district or local development committees, where decisions affecting their lives are made. In Malawi, Hirschmann (1985) reports that of the 625 wards only 4.8 per cent were represented by women. The District Development Committee in Blantyre had the most female members being 12 out of 48 persons. In Nigeria, women have generally remained outside the political structure. Even within the last civilian government (the second Republic, 1979-1983), there were only 3 out of 445 elected members of the House of Representatives and 7 in the State legislatures comprising 1332 persons (Bello Imam 1985). In many countries for instance, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, Zambia, Ghana and Mozambique, it has been fashionable to establish female wings or brigades of political parties. By and large however, their role has been to collect votes for, and serve the men. They are rarely consulted on important matters or given major political positions. Even in places where special ministries have been erected for women (e.g.Zimbabwe), little has been achieved (Parpart 1986). All over the continent, women's organizations have sprung up as in Burundi, Nigeria and Mozambique. They serve as pressure groups outside of political system, but do not always received due recognition even on matters affecting women. Again, male attitudes of superiority, women's multiple roles which sap their energies and reduce their free time, the level and type of education given to women and refusal of governments to alter structures are some of the main obstacles to political participation. This form of activity is yet to be viewed as legitimate in the way that spheres of action had been preserved within precolonial systems. Also

there was usually less of a demarcation between the private and public domains of life in the precolonial setting.

3. The participation of youth

A major difference between the Western social system as it had developed by the 20th century and indigenous systems, is the definition of childhood, and adulthood as well as the behaviour expected of each. Childhood has been prolonged as a dependency period in the West and the youth are in school for an extended period. Thus, with Western education, the breakdown of the age-grade system and the importation of attitudes on work and family relationships, the situation of youth has gradually changed. Many are no longer available, because of education and urbanization, to work on communal projects at the village level. Rural-urban migration has been selective of the young. These developments have had an impact on the free time and energies of women. Female youth assisted women more in former times with household tasks and craft activities. Males helped on the farms. In many countries women now have less access to these human resources.

Nonetheless two types of participatory activity can be discerned. (Tesfaye 1989). The first involves activities by youth to develop projects aimed at assisting the community. Ekong (1983) also discussed the growth of youth progressive associations among the Ibibio in Nigeria. Part of the money and labour for community centres, town halls roads and bridges are supplied by youth voluntary associations. Locally initiated associations develop as religious service organizations, education/'enlightenment' groups or farming co-operatives in various parts of the nation (Pearce 1960). Often established by migrants or the more educated youth, they view themselves as important sources of linkages between the rural population and government institutions. For example, in Faforiji-Amuye, a rural community in South Western Nigeria, the Faforiji Awareness Movement comprises 20 males who seek to educate the community on social and political issues, since the elders are believed to be unable to keep abreast of the changes affecting the town. It has recently taken up the issue of adult education and is seeking assistance from the government (Adeagbo 1989).

Services by youth may also be initiated by outside groups both national and international. In Ethiopia, there was first the Ethiopian University service in which youth were sent to assist in rural development (1968-1974) and later the National Work Campaign through co-operation, instituted after the revolution. Students along with others were sent to build rural infrastructure, conduct literacy classes and raise the political awareness of peasants (Tesfaye 1989). In 1980, the Revolutionary Ethiopian Youth Association was formed as a national unit which reached down to the sub-district levels and comprises about 4 million males and females. Members provide free labour, particularly in agricultural work. In many nations, such as Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, the Cameroon and Zambia, foreign religious groups and the boys' brigade organizations have also organized the youth for service.

In the second type of youth group, programmes are developed as service to youth. Problems of unemployed school leavers, drop-outs, inadequate training and prostitutions are particularly marked in this age group. Thus some

occupational, educational, recreational, and cultural services have been devised. In Botswana, small groups of young men or women (brigades) are given practical and theoretical training to equip them for the job market (Patcha 1989). In the Cameroon, through a programme known as the National Civic Service for Participation in Development, training and information centres for youth (and women) have been established. Young men and women are trained to become farmers. They are seen as good candidates for the new small or medium-size farms now being developed (Patcha 1989). The Kenyan Government has also begun to focus on the issue of technical training for the youth. However, Tesfaye (1989) has emphasized that less attention is usually given to such programmes, compared to those which seek services from youth. Yet, the youth need skills to ensure their effective participation in development.

5. Major obstacles to the participation of women and youth

Numerous problems have been indicated by many scholars as the major obstacles to successful participatory activities among rural populations. Some are peculiar to a location under study (Browne, 1981), while others are more general. Nonetheless, they need to be reviewed systematically to be useful in uncovering what must be done. In doing so, this report adopts the position that a three-tiered framework, which also emphasizes the inter-connections between the obstacles, must be used. The three groups of factors obstructing the growth of participatory development are macro-, intermediate-, and micro-level factors. For this study, this means, global/international, national/regional and household issues respectively.

At the macro-level, broad politico-economic influences emanating beyond national boundaries have for long impinged on the lives of rural dwellers in Africa. This has been acknowledged by a growing volume of researchers. In incorporating the different types of rural communities into the larger world economy, colonial governments devised policies and plans which best suited capital's needs depending on what the locations were believed to offer. Thus according to Kandiyoti (1985) different social and economic measures were instituted according to whether an area was within the grain belt, plantation belt or labour reserve belt. All the measures served however, to enrich the metropolis, weaken the economic base of local communities and destroy regional self-reliance. Periods of epidemics and famines became more outstanding (Vaughan 1987; Ball 1978). As noted earlier, women were significantly affected as they lost rights to land or worked on shrinking plots with little assistance, after male relatives and husbands left for towns, plantations or mines. The role assigned to them by the world capitalist system marginalized them economically and politically. Today new measures such as the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) with its emphasis on currency devaluation, have meant the rising cost of manufactured goods on which people have come to depend and lower prices for export crops. In addition, decisions on how to ameliorate the situation have been reserved for those outside a locale. From abroad, theories and perspectives on planning for development are handed to national governments by foreign governments, private agencies, religious groups and academicians. The growth-pole theory, modernization theory and others focusing on economic growth, and the urban bias of facilities/structures, have all influenced the distortion of rural economies.

Within a region or nation, class interests, have further disempowered the rural populace. Throughout Africa, the urban educated elite have generally installed facilities (health, educational political, commercial etc.) within the urban settlements where they reside, even though agricultural products from the rural locations sustain the economies. Gugler and Flangan have argued that West Africa became a region of primate cities where one "is stunned by the disparity between the concentration of resources in the capital cities and the neglect that is the fate of much of their hinterlands" (1978:40-41). The higher level of illiteracy among rural women and youth compared to their urban counterparts hinders the understanding of technology, the growth of co-operatives, opportunities for improved employment and awareness of socio-political issues. This problem has been highlighted for Nigeria, Liberia, Malawi, Ethiopia, Kenya and so forth (ECA 1988; 1989) With regard to investments made in the rural areas, Scluftan (1983) discussed the case of the Cameroon where agriculture produced about 70 per cent of the external revenue, but received only 6.4 per cent of the 1979-1980 national budget. Between 1960 and 1975 EEC aid was $US 204 million of which only 13 per cent went to the rural economy.

The economic differentials between urban and rural locations are compounded by class differences within the rural population. Many scholars have noted that the peasantry is not a homogenous group (Browne 1975; Okuneye 1984; McCall 1987; EC 1989). Research in the Gambia revealed that seasonal shifts in the amount of food available for different categories of farmers devastates the poorer ones. Poorer households mortgage their land, livestock and jewellery, become indebted to richer households and succumb to high rates of diseases. In addition, mothers terminate lactation early during the heavy energy outlay of the planting season (Chambers et.al. 1979). Women and their children remain the weakest and most vulnerable group. The level of poverty thus remains an important barrier to active participation in community affairs.

At the micro-level, household behaviour between males and females incorporate both the cultural and structural dynamics of a given region. Increasingly, female scholars are insisting that global or national (class) issues alone will not uncover all the salient obstacles to female community participation. As Kandiyots has argued, "the household can be identified as an important locus of women's subordination" (1985:97). It is at this level that female productive and reproductive labour are controlled by men and their allies (e.g. mothers-in-laws, menopausal women) within the lineage. For instance, in many patrilineal societies, there is sustained interest in the fecundity of wives who are supposed to bear children to assist on family farms, and sons to augment the lineage. The patrilineal structure has sought to maintain control over women's fertility and/or sexuality. Family planning services which would break the cycle of endless childbirth and poor health have been resisted (Olusanya 1969; Caldwell, 1987). In polygynous households a man may, through custom, be able to shift a lot of the child-related responsibilities to each wife. There is then little motivation for early interest in limiting the number of children born (Fapohunda and Todaro, 1988).

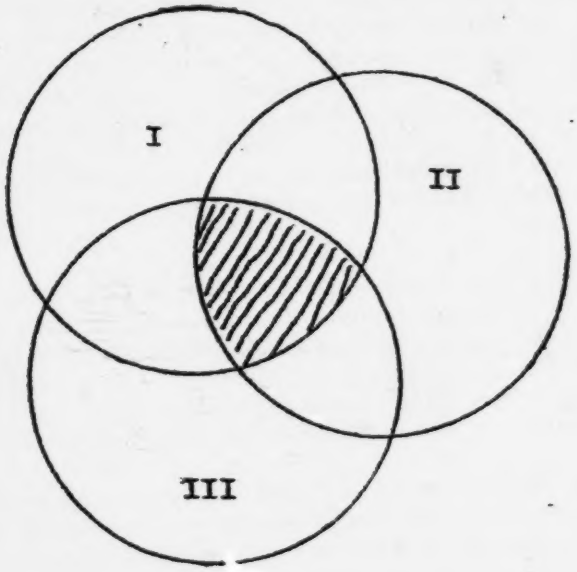
Women's work for the household often include long hours of family labour on lineage farms, their own separate income-generating activities e.g. crafts, trade., child care, cooking, water and fuel collection as well as assistance during family festivals or ceremonies. The days are long and the tasks arduous.

What is significant is that regardless of the volume of these contributions, power and decision making rights are generally skewed in favour of the husband. Men seek to enforce their privileges and often oppose any new commercial or political activity which threaten their dominance. Kandyoti (1985) has reminded us that after capitalist penetration when traditional households were sometimes split, with men in towns and women on the farms, men sought to retain the balance of power in their favour. They needed a spouse who would perform her duties in their absence, raise the children and develop a homestead to which they could finally retire (e.g. Lesotho). Geiger (1982) has pointed out that even in socialist-oriented systems like Tanzania, male power remains unquestioned. Rural women however are dissatisfied and complain of the way men control their labour, finances and time.

Gender relations therefore, as exhibited first within the household cannot be ignored as a fundamental obstacle to women's community decision making roles. The point is often made that although income-generating projects are important in the comprehensive scheme of alleviating female poverty, these may not obtain the desired results in those countries where women must turn over their earnings to men or where men then devise means of reducing their former responsibilities.

When the three levels of obstacles are considered, it is crucial to emphasize the ways in which there are interconnections such that problems become rather complex. Below in figure 1, it can be seen as stated earlier, that the relationship between the factors is not linear.

Figure I : Factors Affecting Popular Participation



Key

I - Macro, global politico-economic factors.

II - Intermediate, national/class factors

III - Micro, household dynamics.

/// - Interconnected obstacles.

Source: Pearce, T.O. (1988)
"Theoretical Issues in the Development of Health and Medical Care in Nigeria".

To further explain the above model, the issue of literacy will be taken up. Illiteracy is every where taken as a major impediment to participation among rural women. Using the interlocking circles, the complexity of the situation can be highlighted. At the macro-level, it has been well established that both the type and level of education offered women during the colonial era restricted their move into decision-making political and administrative

facilities to redress this problem after independence. Thus even when more women began going to school, rural women had less options than their urban sisters. Many rural training centres (Tanzania, Malawi, Kenya etc.) emphasized home-economics and not agricultural or technical skills. The focus of both the colonial and post-colonial educational programmes generally suited men who often resented female interest in the higher income earning activity of cash cropping. Extension workers also paid little attention to women.

In a recent article entitled "Women and books in Africa: A question of Survival?", Mugo wrote that in Kenya, poor and/or rural women find it difficult to make the time needed to cultivate reading habits. In addition, their husbands often make it impossible. One of the women in her adult literacy class was warned by her husband "never again to be caught, at any time, day or night, reading a book ... He had beaten her up thoroughly - just to drive the message home. She also noted that "with only two exceptions, all the students attended these private classes under strict secrecy" (1988:3). Such activity may open up new venues and take women away from their expected roles. Taken together, male attitudes, the policies of the national elite and the residue of colonial programmes have reinforced each other to retard the educational advancement of women. To summarize; the numerous obstacles outlined by various scholars which include women's lack of access to resources such as skills, time, health, money, labour-saving technology and self-confidence, must be understood within a general framework. Each resource, which limits female participation in decision-making processes affecting their own lives and that of the general community, is shaped by the dynamics of human behaviour at the international, national and household level as demonstrated above. It is therefore imperative to understand the way one level connects with the others. Central also is the fact that policies and plans emanating from the first two levels interact with and reinforce old gender relations to the increasing detriment of rural women in the modern era.

6. Official attempts at mobilizing the rural populace

The data on Africa reveal that over the past 20 odd years, various governments have turned their attention to the issue of grass-roots action in social development. It is possible to discern three broad approaches. Countries such as the Cameroon, Nigeria and Kenya exemplify separate versions of one approach. In Tanzania and Ethiopia, special programmes have been established within the socialist framework. Finally, Ghana has attempted similar programmes outside of a socialist blue-print.

In the first approach, the central government attempts make use of local indigenous self-help groups and develops administrative structures through which officials can oversee the activities of local groups. This process took route early in Kenya where the government sought to harness the energy of the Harambee self-help movement (Oyugi 1985). Guidelines were set and groups were encouraged to tow the line if they wished for financial assistance. According to Oyugi, the institutional arrangements are such that the civil service plays the key role in planning and controlling local self-help projects. From the central through the district to the local government areas, civil servants make the major decisions about the siting and financing of projects. People are often asked to implement projects decided upon elsewhere. Over the years, there has

developed a maldistribution of projects such that the central and coastal zones have a higher concentration than the North Eastern area.

There appears to be a remarkable similarity between the Kenyan and newly budding Nigerian 'bureaucratic model' for popular participation. With the recent development of the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI 1987), Better Life for Rural Women (1987) and the Directorate for Social Mobilization (MAMSER, 1987) structures were established at the national, state and local levels in which officials are to be appointed by the government and accountable to it. With DFRRI for example, each village is expected to develop groups/unions which would implement programmes initiated by DFRRI (Olowu 1986). Many projects are not what community members would have chosen nor sited where they have been. Major complaints are that local participation is low, non-existent projects are often recorded as having been completed and Lagos is the seat of directives and plans. Again, even though local government reform was instituted in 1976, ruralites remain suspicious of the councils which are seen as yet another arm of the government. One important difference Nigeria seems to have from Kenya, is that self-help groups still work independently of the official structures established by the government. The framework which Kenya forged immediately after independence did not occur in Nigeria. The government has only just begun to turn its attention to the idea of using local voluntary associations. A legitimate fear (Atte 1986; Olowu 1986) is that with the present organizational forms and emphasis on control from the top, only the facilitation role will be allowed the local populace.

The Ghanaian authorities with assistance from FAO started experimenting with popular/people's participation programmes in 1983. Rather than just coopt already existing local groups, the plan was to assist in the formation of self-help organizations (ECA 1989). Trained group promoters were to facilitate the formation of homogenous groups where people chose who they wanted to work with and what they wanted to do. The majority focused on income-generating activities in the area of food production such as fishing, maize farming and gari-making. The aim of the "People's Participation in Rural Development through the promotion of Self-help Organization" project was to develop a comprehensive scheme whereby people learnt to work together within the modern context. In the complex world outside the village, experience and confidence is now needed to develop linkages with institutions such as government organizations, NGOs and banks (Pearce et. al. 1989). The relationship should be to the benefit of the village group. Methods of collecting data and evaluating their own activities were also taught. Administrative, financial and educational support was given to the scheme and emphasis was on planning from the bottom-up. The poorest rural groups were targeted and attention was given to women.

The Ghanaian experiment has been characterized as an induced form of participation in which government - appointed catalysts attempted to develop rural participation within a framework developed by the central government. However, the overall political system and political culture has not been revamped. What therefore followed was the continued master-client relationship, between the people and the financial supporters, slow development of self-reliance skills, limited interest in group as opposed to individual enterprises and minimal participation of women (membership was 4 to 5 per cent) (ECA 1989).

In Ethiopia and Tanzania, the programmes developed for mass mobilization were part of larger state policies to alter their political systems. Both have attempted socialism. The Ujamaa villagisation programmes discussed earlier was the main participation scheme in Tanzania, Ethiopia sought immediately to abolish feudal relationships and increase female participation in rural institutions by developing laws and edicts to release them from the trap of class and patriarchal structures (Teferi, 1989). Producers Co-operatives, Peasants and Women's Associations were the main vehicles through which women could participate in development. There appears to be more conscious government recognition of the traditional biases against women within the new Ethiopian society (ILO 1986). Nonetheless, it has been acknowledged that even though legally women can participate in decision-making at any level, women's associations remain poor, mothers still labour under their multiple yokes and men feel threatened by the possibility of status alterations within the household. The input of the female voice in community participation therefore remains negligible.

7. Recommendations

The complexity of the obstacles outlined above requires that thoughts about solutions must look into those that deal with both the needs of the rural poor in general and women specifically. In viewing the problem from the macro-intermediate and micro-levels it is obvious that solutions must be multi-dimensional, incorporating the behaviour of external agents, national elite and the ruralites themselves. In this section, recommendations will be outlined in terms of conceptual, structural/institutional, legal and procedural issues.

7.1 Conceptual issues

On the issue of what kind of participation (Olowu 1989; ECA 1989; McCall 1987), there is still little agreement. In moving towards the ideals of the new concepts such as self-governance and empowerment, funding agencies, central governments and privileged groups within rural areas (men, rich peasants etc.) must be made to move away from perceptions of participation which merely stop with decentralization or the maintenance of present privileges. For instance, Kabwasa (1986) related how a local carpenter started a self-help group in a village near Idiofa in Zaire. The first innovation was the insistence that women, formerly excluded from public debate, must now be part of decision-making bodies. In many nations, women did not have, or have lost, much of their public voice. Even if the institutional arrangements for group action are to differ, indigenous practices which support the relegation of women, the young or poor to the private domain or background must not longer be supported because they are "traditional". Thus, ethnic norms of consultation where chiefs, men or the wealth become bottlenecks must be queried. These remain as obstinate as the machinations of international and national development institutions.

Durning (1989) has pointed out that most assistance institutions still view popular participation as a method by which peasants are asked to build their own infrastructure although the latter are rarely consulted on their needs. There is now a serious risk that all the new organizations forging their way into development assistance will "simply try to enlist grass-roots groups, as new implementation arms for their own plans, rather than going through the process ... of learning to plan projects and policies in consultation with grass-roots

groups ... Institutionalizing accountability to the poor in development agencies requires allowing, even encouraging, the dispossessed to participate in planning and decision-making" (Durning 1989:45). With increased education and consciousness raising within the local groups (e.g. Ethiopia), those seeking assistance must learn to pick and choose, rejecting assistance which attempts to control or merely facilitate the goals of the donor organization.

The above perspective on popular participation is a conceptual ideal towards which reality should move. Neither the 'traditional' set-up nor present governmental approaches in most African have developed it. In most of the former, youth and women were significantly restricted and the latter has incorporated rural dwellers (and the urban poor) into the growing numbers of the disempowered. While the way forward will be difficult and long term for both community members and outsiders, certain institutional, legal and procedural changes must be initiated if more than lip-service is to be paid to the issue of popular participation.

7.2 Structural/institutional issues

Given the diversity of community-based self-help groups, an important starting point is the effort to build on these groups. In the case of Zaire referred to above, the villagers used the clan system of taxation rather than taxing individuals. Many projects came to fruition. Various forms of collective action range from the savings activities of credit unions, to collective ownership of land or other property. Innovations should be encouraged from this base and not from packages brought in from outside. For instance, it is known that co-operative models imported from the technologically advanced nations have often failed. Since, there are available patterns of indigenous co-operative behaviour, people should be encouraged to improve on these and governments can tailor the conditions of recognition and assistance, to suit the economic and cultural context. Ladipo (1981) revealed that uneducated women in rural Southern Nigeria often have a difficult time fulfilling governmental conditions. Even with official assistance, co-operatives must not be seen as an arm of the authorities in rural development.

One important lesson emanating from indigenous settings is the linking of groups from the bottom to the top. Representatives from lower bodies sit on higher bodies until the pinnacle is reached (Pearce 1989). The bureaucratic model favoured by both central governments and many international agencies emphasizes control from the top downwards. Yet from the village to the district, regional or national level, administrative structures can be built from the bottom up (Atte 1986). What needs to be expanded with regard to most indigenous models is the range of representatives. Another important dimension of structure was the way interlocking groups also knitted the whole community together horizontally. Today, there is a tendency for the same privileged people to be circulated between new development programmes. If local power is to be restored, a wider range of associations (especially those of ruralites, youth and women) must be viewed as capable of sending representation to decision-making organizations.

Most of the research on the community-based groups in Africa have recognized the need to develop mechanisms for improving the economic well-being

of these groups. Special credit facilities need to be set-up for both ruralites and women as special groups. In Nigeria, the Peoples Bank was established in 1989 for the urban poor (male and female). Money may be borrowed without collateral, but one does it as a member of a registered self-help association. This is meant to encourage group formation. Suggestions have also been made for the establishment of similar organizations in the rural areas. One important similar organizations in the rural areas. One important feature which must also be incorporated into other similar banks, is the very low interest rate. This is technically known as a charge for operating the scheme and not real interest. Low rates are necessary since the economic recession in Africa will affect repayment. As yet it is too early to assess the bank's performance.

In addition to the increased role to be played by self-help and co-operative groups, structures and projects targeted for women and youth need to be intensified. The debate as to whether or not these groups need targeting is unnecessary. They need both special and general attention. As Teferi (1989) has argued, special attention should take many forms including women's bureaux, ministries and commissions. Income-generating projects and credit assistance must also be intensified. What is imperative is that these institutions and projects must be integrated into a nations overall development machinery. Too often in the past, there has been a concentration on either domestic science education or projects for which no market exists. There has also been the problem of energy being expended on welfare projects unrelated to the food production or other economic roles of women in the community (Stamp 1989). Many projects serve to further remove women from the mainstream of participatory development. Special projects should not, however, be discontinued, but re-evaluated for their role in assisting or further marginalizing women.

Women must also be part of general rural projects. In the field of agriculture for example, the consistent complaint has been female exclusion from agricultural programmes. Extension workers either ignore female farmers, use technology not suited to them or focus on home economics when dealing with women. Hirschumann (1981) has argued that all new national or community projects must be evaluated for their impact on women and the degree to which the needs of women are incorporated into designs. Women are known to be very enthusiastic about literacy campaigns. Effort has to be made to enable them attend classes regularly. Labour and time saving technology (e.g. cooking stoves, transportation, water supply etc.) are thus needed. In the same vein, day care centres, school feeding programmes, health services (especially MCH and family planning services) are part of the support system which allow women to participate more fully in general community development programmes (Palia 1975). Without these women are perceived as inconsistent participants who slow down or jeopardize programmes.

Access to formal education and the acquisition of functional skills is expected to improve participation in development (Selassie 1989). Women have generally lagged behind men in formal education. Priority is usually given to sons and the myth is that girls will be catered for by their future husbands. However, reality shows that rural women remain the backbone of food production and social reproduction. Nonetheless, increasingly, the lack of know-how in dealing with the growing complexities of modern farming or the handing of the numerous agencies and authorities in their environment hampers women. Not only

must more females be enrolled in school, but women need to be provided with technical skills to improve their work. In training centres, information can be acquired about new activities such as poultry farming, the mixing of insecticides, the development of hybrid seeds and improved marketing or storage techniques (Teferi 1989). Women have also been found to lack confidence in modern protocol. Thus training in leadership roles, the procedure of formal meetings and management skills are also necessary (Hirschmann 1985). Browne (1975) has suggested that the use of tapes will enhance the dissemination of information when representatives to higher bodies return home to report on conferences and meetings to their respective constituents. The training of youth in training centres often serves two purposes. First, they are being incorporated into rural development schemes. Secondly, they can be sent out as animators, catalysts and extension workers. This is done in Ethiopia "to reduce the problems associated with cross cultural communication in employing highly trained extension workers with urban backgrounds" (Selassie 1989-20). Youth programmes in which trainees receive some remuneration while in training can attract rural youth, as nursing did in the past.

Education, however, should not flow in one direction. McCall (1987) has made the important point that a lot of indigenous technical knowledge (ITK) is buried within local communities. Its de-emphasis begun during the colonial era, when the foreign administrators had little faith or interest in the modes of local participation, and the knowledge base upon which community survival had hitherto rested (Pearce, 1989). This stand generally persisted into the past colonial era. But at the local level, people possess both everyday "recipe" knowledge and specialized information for survival. As McCall argued, most of this knowledge is operational, practical and can be evaluated. It exists in all areas of life, agriculture, medicine, geography, agro-meteorology and so forth. Over time new information can be developed from the synthesis of old knowledge existing in a locale and externally provided knowledge. The people themselves can be actively involved in innovations. At present, indigenous knowledge is often extracted only when outsiders wish to capitalise on it. If development is perceived as a process of problem - solving (Kabwasa 1986), then within specific geographic, cultural and political locations, the incorporation of ITK will provide more lasting solutions than prepackaged schemes introduced by experts from outside. Neither type of knowledge should be clung to for reasons of sentiment or power-play. The issue at hand is the process of problem-solving in which local community members have a strong voice.

7.3 Legal issues

Throughout Africa, women labour under discriminatory legal frameworks which impeded their role in participatory development. In many instances, civil, customary and religious laws present an arena of confusion. There is the issue of purdah and the legal battles to keep young girls in school as they are withdrawn for early marriage. Men are still generally considered to be the head of the household and are favoured in terms of access to land, tax relief and pension laws (Teferi 1989). In many places, women must get a written consent from their husbands to be able to practice family planning, although this has ceased in some, such as Ethiopia.

The first step towards redress is alterations in the law to allow women access to resources such as education, income/earnings, land and other property where these are denied. Although this does not ensure improvements overnight, when backed by policies to ease the way, changes do occur. For instance, the importance of such things as income-generating projects, family planning services, and the training facilities discussed above, must be emphasized here. One major factor stressed in the literature on Ethiopia, is the presence of consciousness raising programmes for women and youth (ILO 1986; Selassie 1989). With each new generation, the impact of such programmes will be felt. Again, the conscious placement of women with progressive views in ministries, committees and councils needs to be encouraged. Too often, the females placed in these positions have not had their own consciousness raised. In addition, new policies can be referred to women for the review of their impact on the female population.

7.4 Procedural issues

The main method of solving problems in places like Nigeria, has been the quick inauguration of programmes and structures and the tendency to throw money at a problem. Many plans to increase popular participation and develop the rural areas, such as Operation Feed the Nation, the Green Revolution and the Basic Health Service Scheme have been grand failures. Money is poured into the building of physical structures or the growth of bureaucracies until the programme grinds to a halt. There are speculations that on-going programmes such as DFRRI (1987) and the rural banking programme (1977) will suffer the same fate. In the case of the latter scheme, branches are merely being established and little else is done to reach the rural populace.

What needs to be learnt from all these failures is that a focus on popular participation must be an acknowledgement of the importance of social organization, social skills, and psycho-social resources (Ogendo 1986) in co-development. As suggested throughout this paper, local development requires co-production with the main/chief actors being members of the community. Even though outsiders, both national and international, may possess accumulated modern technology and money, local personnel must be allowed to take the initiative. This involves the citing of problems, stating the priorities and taking a major role in the planning, designing and execution of projects. Experience has shown that too much intrusions from central governments or foreign development institutions stunts the efforts of local people. Initiative is often killed, while control and dependency persist (ECA 1989).

Lessons can be learnt from the Melka Oba Producers' Co-operative in Ethiopia. When community members sought day care facilities, they were visited by a committee organized by the Family Development Project and composed by a number of organizations. The outsiders were merely facilitators offering advice and money where needed. The community produced the materials it could, but most importantly, it organized itself to handle the problem. The experience generated from this was used to develop other projects. Thus NGOs, development institutions, group promoters or animators must be educated to learn to play a secondary role. Up-till the present time, the activities of community members have been secondary when projects are organized and implemented.

One consistent problem has been that both national governments and donor agencies have retained the control of the purse and dictated how money must be spent. The issue is not that they remain unaware that local communities or grass-roots organizations need more monetary freedom, but that they intend to maintain control. For this reason Durning claims that eventually self-help will fall out with organizations which seek to maintain the status quo, because the self-help movement is political "it is the struggle to control the future" (1989:53).

Finally, one method of improving on the present situation, is to ensure certain forms of research and data collection are instituted. There is the need for more data on the present situation of women. Gender sensitive research on work, household and political behaviour are needed. For instance, more must be known about the specific problems facing women of different educational, age, and occupational groups. Women face different problems at different stages of their life cycle. Stamp (1989) has also argued for more studies on the actual process of association formation and viability in order to accumulate knowledge which others can latter use. Governments and organizations should request that statistics be gender-specific and new concepts developed to incorporate the contributions of women within the family and informal sector. It will be necessary to elicit women's ideas on what needs to be researched. It is not too far fetched to incorporate the 'objects' of study into the research design for data collection, analyzes and evaluation.

8. Conclusion

Popular participation in its various forms was wide-spread within the indigenous pre-colonial communities of Africa. Today, there has been an explosion of interest in developing and harnessing whatever has remained after the colonial encounter. Both new and old practices are being scrutinized by international agencies and national governments in the hope that local group action can become a major dimension of rural and national development. Numerous schemes are being developed. In some cases, the community-based groups still work largely independently of formal governmental structures and policies, as in Nigeria. In other cases, they have long been controlled by government bureaucratic set-up. These organizations remain the cornerstone of rural participation, although they vary in type, structure, objectives and size. However, for their growth and survival, much needs to be done in the way of policies, institutional frameworks and the reorientation of those assisting. Rural youth and women battle with both external and local (e.g. within the household) obstacles which impede greater participation.

Participation is obstructed by the lack of access to resources such as money, land, property and skills which produce poverty. Poverty and cultural roles stand in the way of time and decision-making positions necessary for increased participation. The concept of empowerment has gained currency in the field of participatory development and unless changes are instituted at the international, national and household levels, little will be realized. In this report the changes envisaged have been discussed in terms of conceptual, institutional, legal and procedural issues.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adeagbo, B. 1989 — Personal Communication: Mr. Adeagbo is the Director of the Faforiji Awareness Movement.

Afonja, S. 1983 — "Women, Power and Authority in Traditional Yoruba Society" in Visibility and Power Dube, L. Ardener, S. and Leacock, E. eds. New Delhi: OUP, pp.136-157.

Atte, O. 1986 — "Overcoming Rural Under Development in Nigeria's Past Approaches and an Alternative View" the Quarterly Jn. of Admin., vol xx, No.3/4, pp.137-52.

Babalola, S. 1983 — The Impact of Tobacco Farming on the Family Structure of Igboho Farmers: A Study in the Effect of Economic Change on Family Structure. Unpublished M.Sc. Thesis. Dept. of Soc./Anthro., University of Ife (now OAU).

Ball, N. 1978 — "Drought and Dependence in the Sahel" International Jn. of Health Services 8:2:271-298.

Barr, J. 1975/6 — "Pare Women: A Case of Political Involvement" Rural Africana, No.29, pp.121-134.

Brown, B. 1983 — "Impact of Male Labour Migration on Women in Botswana". African Affairs, 82:328:367-388.

Browne, A. 1981 — "Attitudes of Ghanaian Rural Youth Towards Crafts and other Occupations". Rural Africana, No.10, pp.19-29.

Browne, D. 1975 — The Women's Programme in Tetu: A Case Study. Working Paper No.235 of Inst. for Development Studies. University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Bujra, J. 1983 — "Class, Gender and Capitalist Transformation in Africa" Africa Development viii: 3:17-42.

Caldwell, J. and Caldwell, P. 1987 — The Cultural Context of High Fertility in sub-Saharan Africa" Population and Development Review, 13:3: 409-437.

Chambers, R. et.al.1979 — "Seasonal Dimensions to Rural Poverty: Analysis and Practical Implications" Jn. of Tropical Medicine and Hygine, 82:8:156-172.

Daka, A. & Terefe, H. 1984 — "An Assessment of Women in Development through Co-operatives in Ethiopia", Paper Presented at National Workshop on Women in Agricultural Development, Awassa, Ethiopia.

Durning, A. 1989 — Action at the Grass-roots: Fighting Poverty and Environmental Decline Worldwatch Paper 88.

ECA 1988 — Economic Commission for Africa, Modalities of Popular Participation in Rural Development in Selected African Countries, ECA/SDA/IRD/88/1.1(11)(a).

ECA 1989 — Modalities of Popular Participation in Rural Development in Selected African Countries: The Cases of Ghana and Tanzania, ECA/SDA/IRD/89/1.1(1)(b).

Ekong, U. 1983 — The Role of Voluntary Associations in Community Development: A Case Study of Eket Local Government Area. B.Sc. Thesis. Dept. of Soc./Anthro. University of Ife (now OAU). The Social Economic Research Division of UNECA.

Fadaka, A. 1989 — Women and Rituals in Traditional Yoruba Markets. M.Sc. Thesis. Dept. of Religious Studies, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife.

Fadipe, N. 1970 — The Sociology of the Yoruba. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.

Fapohunda, E. & Todaro, M. 1988 — "Family Structure, Implicit Contracts and the Demand for Children in Southern Nigeria" Population and Development Review, 14:4:571-594.

Gateere, T. 1989 — Popular Participation in Development with particular Reference to Rural Women and Youth in Kenya. Report presented to the Social Economic. Research Division of UNECA.

Gebre, S. 1988 — Modality of Popular Participation in Rural Development in Ethiopia: The Case of Melka Oba Producers' Co-operative.

Geiger, S. 1982 — "Umoja Wa Wanawake Wa. Tanzania and the Needs of the Rural Poor" The African Studies Review, xxv: 2/3: 45-65.

Gugler, J. and Flanagan, W. 1978 — Urbanization and Social Change in West Africa. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Guyer, J. 1980 "Female Farming and the Evolution of Food Production Patterns Amongst the Beti of South-Central Cameroon". Africa 50:4:341-356.

Hirschmann, D. 1984 Bureaucracy and Rural Women: Illustrations from Malawi. Working Papers (No.71) of Michigan State University.

" 1985 Women's Participation in Malawi's Local Councils and District Development Committees. Working Papers (No.98) of Michigan State University.

ILO 1986 From Crisis to Sustained Development: A Programme of Action. Report of the ILO Multi-disciplinary Programming Mission to Ethiopia.

Kabwasa, N. 1986 "The Integration of Cultural Values in Rural Development Projects in Africa: The Case of a Project in Zaire" Rural Africana, No.25/6, pp.75-82.

Kandiyoti, D. 1985 Women in Rural Production Systems: Problems and Policies. Paris: UNESCO.

Ladipo, P. 1981 "Developing Women's Co-operatives: An Experiment in Rural Nigeria" Jn. of Development Studies, vol. 30, pp.125-136.

Lewis, H. 1970 "Wealth, Influence, and Prestige Among the Shoa Galla" In Social Stratification in Africa. Tuden, A. and Plotnicov, L. eds.; New York: The Free Press pp. 163-186.

Little, K. 1965 West African Urbanization: A Study of Voluntary Associations in Change. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lloyd, P. 1967 Africa in Social Change Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Maeda, J. 1982 "Peasant Organizations and Participation in Tanzania" in Studies in Rural Participation Bhaduri, A. and Rahman, MD., pp.15-33.

Mba, M. 1982 Nigerian Women Mobilized. Berkeley: Inst. of International Studies. University of California.

McCall, U. 1987 The Implications of East African Rural Social Structure for Local-level Development: The Case for Participatory Development Based on Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Paper presented at Seminar on Eastern Africa Rural Development Experience: Strategies in Local-level Development, Nairobi.

Mikell, G. 1985 — "Expansion and Contraction in Economic Access for Rural Women in Ghana", Rural Africana, No.21, pp.13-30.

Mugo, M. 1989 — "Women and Books in Africa: A Question of Survival" International Foundation for Development Alternatives Sept./Oct., No.73, pp.3-10.

Okuneye, P. 1984 — "Agricultural Co-operatives and Redistribution of Income in Nigeria" The Ife Social Science Review, 17:1/2:99-118.

Olowu, D. 1986 — "Institutional Approaches to Rural Infrastructure Development in Nigeria". Ut. Jn. of Admin., vol. xx, No.3/4, pp.153-179.

-- 1989 — "Local Institutions and Development: The African Experience" Canadian Jn. of African Studies, vol. 23, No.1.

Olusanya, P. 1969 — "Nigeria: Cultural Barriers to Family Planning among the Yorubas" Studies in Family Planning, No.37, pp.13-16.

Onsando, W. 1981 — Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization. Paper presented at Seminar on Rural Development and Women's Employment Problems in Kenya.

Onwuejeogwu, A. 1975 — The Social Anthropology of Africa. London: Heinemann.

Otite, O. 1975 — Autonomy and Dependence, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.

Oyugi, W. 1985 — "Popular Participation and Access to Basic Needs in Kenya" in Popular Participation in Planning for Basic Needs. Concepts, Methods and Practices., Lisk, F. ed. London Gower, pp.148-185.

Pala, A. 1975 — A Preliminary Survey of Avenues for and Constraints on Women's Involvement in the Development Process in Kenya. Paper presented at Seminar on The Changing and Contemporary Role of Women in Society, Addis Ababa.

Parpart, J. 1986 — Women and the State in Africa. Working Papers (No.117) of Michigan State University.

Patcha, M. 1989 — Guidelines and Strategies for Enhancing Popular Participation Particularly of Rural Women and Youths in the Development Process in Africa. Paper Submitted to Social Economic Research Division. ECA.

Pearce, T. 1988 — Theoretical Issues in the Development of Health and Medical Care in Nigeria. Paper presented at Seminar on Health and Social Policy in Nigeria. Obafemi Awolowo University. Ife.

Pearce, T. et.al. 1988 — Generating an income in the urban environment; the Experience of Street Food Vendors in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Africa 58:1!

Pearce, T. 1989 — Popular Participation: The Nigerian Experience. Report Submitted to the Social Economic Research Division of UNECA.

Shuaib, B. 1985 — "Integrating Rural Women in Development" in Report of National Workshop/Exhibition to mark the end of the United Nations Decade for Women. The National Committee on Women and Development, ed., Lagos. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Social Development, Youth and Sports, pp.16-28.

Selassie, S. 1989 — Participation of Women and Youth in the Development Process: the Ethiopian Situation Report Submitted to Social Economic Research Division of UNECA.

Stamp, P. 1975/6 — "Perceptions of Change and Economic Strategy Among Kikuyu Women of Mitero, Kenya". Rural Africana. No.29, pp.19-43.

Stamp, P. 1989 — Technology, Gender and Power in Africa, Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.

Tiagha, 1989 — Guidelines and Strategies for Enhancing Popular Participation Particularly of Rural Women and Youth in the Process of Development in Cameroon. Report Submitted to Social Economic Research Division of UNECA.

Teferi, E. 1989 — Women and Development in Ethiopia. Paper Presented at Conference on Population issues in Ethiopia's National Development, Addis Ababa.

Tesfaye, A. 1989 — Youth in Ethiopia: Problems and Prospects. Paper Presented at Conference on Population issues in Ethiopia's National Development, Addis Ababa.